

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-5 remain in this application. Claim 6 has been canceled. Claims 1 -3 have been amended. Claim 1 has now been amended to better describe the body of the head fitting. Specifically, the term “elbow” has been replaced by “elbow-shaped body.” Claim 1 has also been amended to better describe the novelty of the “test plug” and to incorporate a portion of the claimed subject matter of Claim 2. Claim 2 has been amended to delete the subject matter incorporated into Claim 1. Claim 3 has been amended to be consistent with the language changes of Claim 1.

The examiner rejected Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,295,664 (Fritz ‘664). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the examiner’s rejection of the remaining Claims as amended.

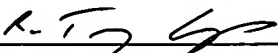
Examiner states that “ the Fritz reference discloses a head fitting comprising an elbow (26 and 12)...” It should be noted that reference numerals 26 and 12 identify two separate components of the Fritz assembly: an elbow 26 (col. 3 line 5) and a retaining body 12 (Col. 2, line 67). While, the retaining body of Fritz has an integral break-away or “molded in place” test plug, elbow 26 does not. Neither of these cited “elbows” individually disclose or suggest the claimed invention as amended. The claimed invention incorporates the break out test plug as an integral part of the elbow itself. While the retaining body 12 and elbow are joined together in the Fritz assembly, nothing in Fritz ‘664 discloses or suggests that the break away be molded within the flow passage of the elbow itself and inset from the mouth of the flange.

Furthermore, Fritz ‘664 illustrates the prior art’s limitation that is addressed by the claimed invention. Heretofore, breakout test plugs could not be molded as an integral part of the elbow where the plug was inset within the curved flow passage of an elbow. Consequently, prior art head fittings require a separate test cover or a separate retaining body having a mold in place test plug (such as the ones taught in Fritz ‘664) that is joined to the elbow to seal the flow passage of the elbow. The claimed invention has eliminated the need for the separate test cover or the separate retaining body as taught by Fritz. By eliminating this additional assembly component, the head fitting has been made simpler without any loss of capability. Consequently, combining the features of retaining body 12

and elbow 26, as suggested by Examiner, teaches away from the novelty of the claimed invention. The fact that the Fritz assembly identifies a separate elbow 26 and a retaining body 12, underscores the novelty of the claimed invention as currently amended.

In conclusion, this invention is distinguished from the cited art. The cited art does not disclose the claimed invention as amended. The Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claims 1-5 are now in acceptable form for a notice of allowance. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22213-1450, on December 10, 2004.



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(Date)